

NATIONAL CONGRESS BULLETIN



FEBRUARY
1941

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF
PARENTS AND TEACHERS, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

PLEASE PASS ON TO

Dear Local President:



When I think of the era of the 'nineties and the traditions and the prejudices that had to be overcome before sheltered women could take their place in public life, I am overwhelmed with admiration for those courageous women who were our Founders. Like the pioneers of the covered-wagon trains, they had first to clear the wilderness and break the ground before the seed could be sown along the frontiers of human welfare. And with these other pioneers of America they shared many characteristics: vision and imagination, courage, determination, and, above all, perseverance.

Our Founders helped in the conquest of many social frontiers. But social frontiers are not like geographic frontiers. There is no Pacific Ocean at the end of the trail to act as period to the venture. Social frontiers can be expanded as long as men live together on this earth. The social and economic forests must continue to be cleared, the soil to be plowed, and the rich loam to be exposed so that human brotherhood and creative beauty may spring forth abundantly like fields of golden grain.

The task our Founders mapped out is ours to fulfill. We must draw upon their courage and their determination as we strive to push forward our social frontiers. We have made the child's right to wholesome development our creed. As long as there is poverty, prejudice, ignorance, disease, and unhappiness, the challenge of the Founders must press insistently upon our hearts and souls.

Virginia Kletz

President
National Congress of Parents and Teachers

FORTY-FIFTH ANNUAL CONVENTION

HISTORIC BOSTON will provide the setting for the 1941 Convention of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers which will be held from May 19-22. Headquarters will be at the Statler Hotel.

The theme for this year will be "Modern Problems in Community Living." Based on the three-year administration theme "The Child in His Community," this topic will direct attention to the promotion of activities necessary to the well-being of children and youth. Particular problems growing out of the total defense program also will be considered.

The Vesper Service on Sunday, May 18, will be in King's Chapel. One special session is scheduled in Faneuil Hall, famous "cradle of liberty," built by Peter Faneuil in 1742.

Four section meetings are planned for discussion of the work of Councils and Districts, and in the areas of Rural Service and High Schools — in addition to the National Chairmen's Conferences. A reception to National Life Members, a banquet, and a sight-seeing trip will be among the social features. Another special feature will be a program by the National Mothersingers Chorus.

SPECIAL FOUNDERS DAY RADIO BROADCAST

Date—Saturday, February 15, 1941

Time—5:30-5:45 p. m., E. S. T.

4:30-4:45 p. m., C. S. T.

3:30-3:45 p. m., M. S. T.

2:30-2:45 p. m., P. S. T.

Network—Columbia Broadcasting Company

NATIONAL PRESIDENT TO ADDRESS MEMBERSHIP

FOR almost half a century the National Congress of Parents and Teachers has promoted an educational program uniquely identified with the welfare of children and youth. Serious problems faced the Founders of the Congress. Serious problems still face its leaders today. In addition to the need for securing for all children the rights and privileges to which they are entitled, there is the added challenge arising from problems presented by a nation engaged in a program of total defense. How the National Congress of Parents and Teachers plans to meet this challenge will be discussed by Mrs. Kletz, national president, in a special Founders Day broadcast on February 15. The program is made available through the cooperation of the Columbia Broadcasting Company.

- Please contact your local radio stations and ask them to broadcast the program.

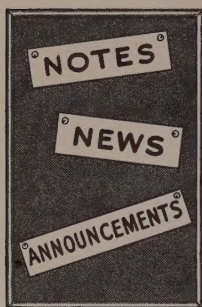
- Invite members and other friends to "listen in."

- Instruct publicity chairmen to secure program announcements in all local papers.

In Memoriam

A RESOLUTION of sympathy to the family of Mrs. Frederic Schoff was passed at the recent meeting of the Executive Committee in New York City. Mrs. Schoff, who died on December 10, was for eighteen years president of the National Congress, and honorary president until her death.

THE P. T. A. BULLETIN BOARD



Social Hygiene Day

PARENT-TEACHER associations, local health departments, welfare and civic organizations, will observe the Fifth National Social Hygiene Day on February 5, when 5,000 community meetings are planned in all parts of the country to call attention to the menace of venereal disease.

It is estimated that one in twenty adults in this nation has such a disease; that 750,000 of the one million new cases each year are found in the younger people between 16 and 30 years of age; and that the lives of nearly 100,000 infants are endangered annually through the infection of their parents.

Of especial concern this year is the "provision of good times in good company" for men in camps and defense industries so that the attraction of undesirable recreation in surrounding communities may be lessened.

A kit of suggested talks, broadcasts, and literature is available from the American Social Hygiene Association, 1790 Broadway, New York City.

NATIONAL CONGRESS CONTACTS

MRS. W. R. CAVANAUGH, national chairman on Radio, represented the National Congress at the Fourth Annual School Broadcast Conference in Chicago in December, presiding over the group meetings held for those interested in the work of parent-teacher associations.

Mrs. William Kletzer, national president, attended the meeting of the National Advisory Committee on WPA Family Life Education in Chicago in January, and served as a consultant at the conference for the state supervisors of Family Life Education which met at the same time.

During February Mrs. Kletzer will go to Washington, D. C. to attend the meetings of the National Conference of Defense Committees of Four-Year Colleges and Universities, and the National Coordinating Committee on Education and Defense.

With Mrs. William A. Hastings, first vice-president, and Howard V. Funk, regional vice-president, she will attend the convention of the American Association of School Administrators in Atlantic City, also in February. At this meeting she will participate in the discussion group on "The Family, an Agency for Character Development." Mrs. Kletzer also will take part in a "Community Councils" meeting in connection with the National Council of Childhood, which holds its sessions at the same time.

Mr. Funk is chairman of the Joint Committee of N.E.A. and N.C.P.T. which meets during the Administrators' convention.

THE ALLIED YOUTH MOVEMENT

UNIQUE among the clubs-with-a-purpose which bring high school boys and girls together are those affiliated with the Allied Youth movement. These youth-led clubs make their own restrictions in personal behavior, working out wholesome good-times patterns as substitutes for drinking parties.

That such clubs are needed is shown by a recent high school survey conducted by Allied Youth in which forty-three per cent of the students replying said that they drink. The survey, made with the aid of secondary schools in thirty-one municipalities in sixteen states, further revealed that scarcely one student in five has correct information on the effects of alcoholic beverages.

With a popular and well-qualified teacher as sponsor, each Allied Youth Post carries on a scientifically focused program of alcohol education. Through question-and-answer sessions, exhibits, and guided reading, the young people themselves supplement the informative address formerly given once a year in schools, and unrelated to scientific study.

Mrs. William Kletzer, president of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, was authorized at the June Executive Committee meeting of the National Congress to serve as a member of the National Advisory Committee of Allied Youth.

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND THE BOSTON CONVENTION

MAY 19-22!

MAGAZINE OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS ELECTED

AT THE recent annual meeting of National Parent-Teacher, Inc., the following were elected officers and directors of the *National Parent-Teacher* magazine:

President — Mrs. James Fitts Hill, Montgomery, Alabama. Mrs. Hill, who was formerly state president of Alabama, is well known to parent-teacher workers as vice-president of Region III.

Secretary — Mrs. M. D. Wilkinson, Tacoma, Washington. Mrs. Wilkinson is vice-president from Region VII. She was formerly chairman of the Magazine committee of the National Congress.

Treasurer — Mrs. William A. Hastings, Madison, Wisconsin. Mrs. Hastings, former state president of Wisconsin, and former chairman of the committee on Character Education, is first vice-president of the Congress.

Other directors who were elected at this meeting are:

Dr. Ada Hart Arlitt, Cincinnati, Ohio; Dr. John E. Anderson, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Howard V. Funk, Bronxville, New York; Mrs. John E. Hayes, Twin Falls, Idaho; Mrs. R. H. Jesse, Missoula, Montana; Mrs. James K. Lytle, Los Angeles, California; Dr. William McKinley Robinson, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Mrs. William Kletzer, president of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, serves as *vice-president* of the Magazine Company.

"CITIZENS ALL"

Radio Forum Evokes Wide Interest

INTEREST in the Radio Forum "Citizens All" is increasing each week as the round-table discussions gather momentum.

Further announcements concerning the participants include the following:

On February 17, two National Congress committee chairmen will be heard on the subject "Is Youth Living Healthfully?" (This is a substitution for the topic "What Is the Brotherhood of Man?") Dr. Ada Hart Arlitt, chairman of Parent Education, and director of the study courses in the *National Parent-Teacher*, is also the head of the Department of Child Care and Training at the University of Cincinnati. With her on the air will be Dr. Lillian R. Smith, chairman of Health and Summer Round-Up of the Children, who also is director of Maternal and Child Health in the Michigan Department of Health at Lansing. Dr. Smith was a practicing physician before she began her public health work.

On February 24, J. W. Faust, National Congress committee chairman of Recreation, and district representative of the National Recreation Association, will share the discussion of "A 24-Hour Community" with Donald DuShane. Mr. DuShane, president of the N.E.A., has been superintendent of schools in Columbus, Indiana, since 1918, and has been active in promoting adequate tenure laws throughout his state and the nation. His sound educational philosophy has been enriched by his broad interests as a citizen.

On March 3, Mrs. William A. Hastings, first vice-president of the National Congress, will be heard with Dr. Frederic B. Knight, Director of Education and Applied Psychology at Purdue, on "The Things Men Live For." Dr. Knight's versatility is shown in the variety of his books, which include a modern approach to arithmetic as well as those dealing with his special field of Educational Psychology. For a number of years Dr. Knight taught at the University of Iowa.

LISTENING GROUPS, ATTENTION!

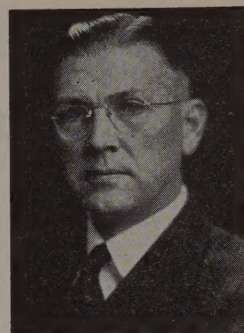
WITH the first month of the Radio Forum already passed, listening groups are beginning to settle down seriously to the business of evaluating the series. Are local groups discussing the questions—never solved completely in any forum? Is your community being challenged by the broadcasts?

This is your broadcast. Do you want future broadcasts? How can they be improved?

Individuals who send in criticisms to the local stations are helping to create an impression of civic interest. They are showing that educational programs of this kind should have a place on the air.

Listen attentively, take notes on the discussions, then talk about them further. Remember that the purpose of the series is to stimulate public interest and action in providing better opportunities for children and young people.

A complete set of the scripts may be secured by sending \$1 to the National Broadcasting Company, Radio City, New York City. Single scripts, 10c each.



DEAN ERNEST O. MELBY
Discussion Coordinator
"Citizens All" Broadcast

Topics for Discussion

- Jan. 6 — "Youth in a Confused World"
- Jan. 13 — "Is Youth Prepared for Family Life?"
- Jan. 20 — "There Are No Outsiders in Education"
- Jan. 27 — "New Frontiers for Community Life"
- Feb. 3 — "Growing in Spiritual Stature"
- Feb. 10 — "Before the 3 R'S"
- Feb. 17 — "Is Youth Living Healthfully?"
- Feb. 24 — "A 24-Hour Community"
- Mar. 3 — "The Things Men Live For"
- Mar. 10 — "Youth Needs Opportunity Now"
- Mar. 17 — "All American Youth"
- Mar. 24 — "Safety: for What and from What?"
- Mar. 31 — "We, the Government"

RADIO FORUM QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questionnaire is suggested for the use of local parent-teacher associations in evaluating the Radio Forum "Citizens All":

Name.....

Address.....

Name of organization..... City..... State.....

a. Did you hear the broadcast? Yes ☐ No ☐

b. Did you have a listening group? If so, how many attended? ☐

c. Or did you listen in your home?.....

d. Who listened? (1) Adults only ☐ (2) Adults and children ☐

e. What do you think of the broadcast?

1. The program was liked very much ☐

2. The program was not liked ☐

3. Was the program helpful?.....

4. What were your reactions in terms of general appeal?.....

5. Further comment.....

PARENT-TEACHER ACTIVITIES

FOR *Promoting Democracy* . . . BULLETIN No. 6

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

"SOCIAL responsibility?"

"Sure, I'm social. I belong to lots of things, more'n I can attend regularly. And as for responsibility—by the time I get through buying food and clothes, and paying taxes and taking care of the kids and voting and doing all the other things a fellow has to do, I've sure got plenty of responsibilities. I take care of 'em pretty well, too, if I do say so myself."

PERSONAL CONCERN IS LIMITED TO NARROW CIRCLE

THAT is just about what the term "social responsibility" means to a good many citizens. In this usage both words refer to personal activities. They refer to the individual's concern in matters close to him and his family circle. There is general concern for the future of friends and acquaintances that are on the edge of the circle; but beyond that, things that happen to other people are accepted quite impersonally. "It's too bad" and "There ought to be a law"; but that is usually the sum total of personal concern. The farther away the threat of misfortune, the more difficult for the individual to realize that he may be vitally concerned, and that he can avoid future trouble by appropriate steps now.

Man seems just naturally to be a procrastinator. He sees and meets trouble only when it comes close to home. He is concerned in proportion to its effect on him and not its effect on men in general. The question asked centuries ago, "Am I my brother's keeper?" is just as pertinent now as then; certainly it hasn't been answered well yet.

DEMOCRACY ASKS RETURNS

IF DEMOCRACY as a way of life is to continue, we have got to do some pretty straight thinking about social responsibility. Democracy guarantees rights and freedom to an individual, and in return imposes responsibility upon him to see that they are equally guaranteed to other men. It is not too

BULLETIN TITLES

I. Introduction

1. What Price Democracy?
2. The P.T.A. — Its Unique Function in a Democracy

II. The Foundation Stones of Democracy

3. The Intrinsic Worth of the Individual
4. Equality
5. The Bill of Rights
6. Social Responsibility
7. The Appeal to Reason
8. The Consent of the Governed
9. Intelligent Citizens

difficult to see and understand this in terms of one person, but when many people live together the interrelation of freedom and responsibility becomes confusingly complex, so much so that most of us conclude that the individual can do nothing about the existing conditions. We may deplore them, but we do little to change them.

All of us are responsible for general welfare in a democracy. If we assume the attitude that things will eventually take care of themselves we are open to the criticism that democracy is wasteful and inefficient. Waste and inefficiency long continued result in difficulties; eventually in disaster.

For a long time people have been trying to find ways to live together with freedom. In some areas they haven't even recognized the important problems, let alone solved them. In others they have come to some definite conclusions which have been put into patterns for common use. Let's look at some of the better-known areas in which this is true.

RULES OF SOCIETY FOR SAFETY OF ALL

"THERE'S a nice, wide road. No cop in sight. I'm a free man and this is a free country, so let's see just how fast this baby can go. Boy, that speedometer says seventy. Flies like a bird, too, smooth and even as can be. Some wagon, this, eh?"

A smooth straight road and a good car probably arouse in every one of us the desire to try out the intricate piece of machinery that modern auto manufacturers have made for us to drive. How much we yield to that impulse depends on circumstances and the individual. Some folks are just naturally reckless, we say; others may be very careful persons. Some of us won't exceed the speed limit because we are afraid of meeting up with the policeman on patrol. Most of us, by far the most of us, drive at a decent speed and obey the limits simply because we are law-abiding citizens and we believe competent authorities have established rules and regulations for our convenience and safety.

One pertinent point to bear in mind, though, is simply that the welfare of many individuals, of society as a whole, outweighs the impulse or desires of the single individual. Up to a certain point one man has freedom to do as he will, but when his actions become a menace to the social group, he meets the force of the laws, rules and regulations that society has made to protect itself from depredation. *Social welfare and social responsibility transcend individual freedom.*

WHAT OF THE ZONING LAWS?

LET'S examine another situation of the same kind, but in an entirely different area.

"But, Mr. Building Inspector, I own this piece of property here on Oak Street in Bumbletown. I have owned it and paid taxes on it for ten years. I want to add another story to the house, to tear out this front where the old porch is, extend it toward the street

and put in large plate-glass windows so that it can be used for a neighborhood store. My cousin over in Felicity Manor used to run a little store and he can move over here and take charge of this one. With the added rooms upstairs there is plenty of space for him and his family to live here, and the store will provide him with work and a fair income. The rent he pays will help a mighty lot with taxes and other expenses on my house. It seems to me that you ought to be glad that we are so independent and are planning to make it possible for people to earn a decent living in this day and age."

CITY ORDINANCE PASSED

"THERE is a lot to what you say, Mr. Bishop. It does seem like a sensible scheme and maybe it would work, but I can't give you a permit to go ahead with your alterations. Why? Well, maybe you remember about eight or nine years ago the city passed a zoning ordinance. There was a big to-do about it at the time because all that land near the depot was being bought up to build apartment houses. Nobody thought much about that until the Oakdale company proposed to buy the old Nickerson pasture and build an apartment house that would hold two hundred and fifty families. Then everyone got excited; said that traffic would be unbearable, we'd need new streets and pavements, the schools wouldn't be big enough, we'd get a lot of undesirable people, and so on.

"Well, the upshot of it was that the city board got some experts to come down from the state university and tell them how this city ought to be laid out and built up. They finally drew up a zoning law and the voters passed it by a big majority. Sure, you remember about all that fuss."

NO VARIATIONS GRANTED

"YOUR property here is in Zone A, that is, in the zone which is restricted to single-family dwellings on lots fifty by a hundred feet and to that kind only. Your present house meets all the requirements, but you can't make the changes on it that you want to make without busting the regulations wide open, and right now the city fathers aren't granting many variations. They got into too much hot water over that filling station down the street four or five blocks."

In this case Mr. Bishop is prevented from doing as he wishes with property

that is completely his own simply because the social group, in this case the voters of Bumbletown, have agreed that no one property owner can do anything with his property which might injure the value, or possibility of desirable development, of the property of all other owners. The welfare of the group transcends the rights of the individual.

IMPORTANCE OF QUARANTINE REGULATIONS

LET'S look at another area, where very little question is raised about limitations to individual liberty.

Dr. Smith is speaking.

"Yes, Mrs. X, no question about it, Sammy is a sick boy. He will be uncomfortable for awhile until he breaks out, but then he will feel much better. With the good care you can give him there is very little possibility of danger to Sammy, but he is a menace to any other child that he comes in contact with. He's got a fine case of scarlet fever, and if he circulates around the village too soon he is apt to spread the disease among other children. He must stay at home in bed until all signs of fever are gone, and then, because he will still be apt to pass on the disease for at least two more weeks, he must stay about the house for that length of time.

"I'll report this case to the health officer, and he will place the house under quarantine until all possibility of passing this on is past. Then Sammy can go about his business just as usual. The quarantine sign will go up this afternoon. I'll drop in again tomorrow just to see that everything is all right; then after that you can call me if you need me."

In the three illustrations given there is not much question but that the group welfare is paramount; that individual rights to freedom of action must be governed by the ultimate effect of those actions on the social group. Group rights have been recognized as clearly and definitely to be served; consequently codes, laws, rules and regulations have been written and accepted to spike them down tight so that the recalcitrant individual may be dealt with in the manner best calculated to bring desired results.

"But," you ask, "what is the point to all this? We know very well that these things are true and that they are carried out in about the same fashion and in the same spirit in almost any modern community. What has all this to do with social responsibility?"

THE GREATEST GOOD FOR THE GREATEST NUMBER

SIMPLY this, that these are the areas in which the best way of living together has been recognized by a majority of the people and for that reason has been written into a code of procedures that we call laws. These are the ground rules by which the game is to be played; and since we all recognize that the greatest good for the greatest number can usually be served by playing the game according to the rules, we are content to have these laws as they are now or as they may be revised to meet the constantly changing conditions that occur in living, changing society. We must remember, though, that society has been a long time building good health practices, and adequate health codes have not always been on our statute books. It was quite all right for a person who lived in a sparsely settled part of the country to build a house according to his whims, to dispose of his sewage in any way he saw fit; but when that person builds his house in a city, he must submit his plans to the properly designated authorities so they may determine the conformity with accepted group practices.

The individual foregoes some of his opportunities, curtails some of his freedom, in order that the group may enjoy better living.

LIMITS TO INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY

THE exact point at which individual liberty and freedom of action ends and group rights begin is not easy to determine. In the situations given at the beginning of this bulletin the limits have been defined, and within those limits the individual is at liberty to act as he will. Beyond those limits he may not go without penalty of law — not a capricious law that says this today and something else tomorrow, but a law that has been worked out by years of experience and experiment to safeguard social well-being.

When one sees and clearly understands that what has been said applies not only to the community in which he lives, but with equal force to the township, county, state, and nation in which he lives, he is then in a position to understand how complex this business of social responsibility really is. If he is concerned with the freedom which he wishes to enjoy in his daily living, he must be equally concerned with the right of every other person to

enjoy equal freedom. No one of us can have full freedom, liberty, democracy, whatever you want to call it, without the attendant responsibility of seeing that everyone else has it too.

DEMOCRACY FOR ALL

By the same token, no community or neighborhood can enjoy the best living if some adjacent community or neighborhood does not have the same opportunities for full, rich living. Democracy — that is, actual living democracy — claims the same relationship as between state and state, and nation and nation.

This does not mean in the least that everyone must have the same kind of houses, or the same amount of clothes, or receive the same income. It does mean that squalor and poverty in one community sooner or later affects adversely every other community with which its inhabitants eventually come in contact. Common sense tells us that it is not good business to allow such a community to exist, but our sense of social responsibility is not strong enough to force us to alleviate the conditions responsible for it. The very complexity of the causes, lack of agreement on a plan of action, vested interests, and a host of other factors make it difficult for us to see just how we may apply efficient remedies. Probably we must start with the simplest problem of the kind that we can find locally, then gradually increase the scope of our study until we have isolated the essential factors that underlie any condition.

GOOD WILL AND SOCIAL VISION NEEDED

WE CAN be sure of only two things in the beginning: first, that lack of social responsibility which makes us guard jealously the rights and freedoms of every person will eventually cost us some of our own rights and freedoms, and second, that men and women of good will and social vision working together on truly democratic principles can build a better place to live in than that place now is, or will be without that good will and appropriate action.

This America of ours has made tremendous changes in its thinking about social responsibility in the past two decades. Some people think that it has gone entirely too fast, others that it is moving entirely too slowly. Whatever we may think, it behooves us to be keen, alert, and intelligent observers and workers for the common

good. Under the democratic system we are the government, we must determine what we will be, then we must work mightily to see that we are what we will be. Anything less than that may lose for us all that we have envisioned for a people "mighty and free."

Social responsibility is not an empty phrase. It is an integral part of democracy, on a par with the liberty, the equality and the freedom that we believe goes into the making of the good life for all of us. It is an essential element in this democracy of ours that we are so completely determined to promote and defend.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

(For P.T.A. study groups and forums)

1. Take a good, thoughtful look at your own community. Determine whether or not it is as fine a place in which to live and bring up your children as you would like it to be.
2. Select one single specific community problem, perhaps in the area of recreational facilities, for very close study. Choose a problem close at home: You ought to start not more than four blocks from the school you are meeting in.
3. Ask questions like these:
 - a. What is this condition doing to people in this community?
 - b. Who is responsible for this condition?
 - c. How can it best be remedied?
 - d. Who will benefit if it is changed for the better?
 - e. Can everyone in this community enjoy democratic living as long as this condition exists?
4. Now you are ready to proceed as outlined in bulletin No. 3 under "Suggested Activities."

STUDY MATERIALS

1. *The Child in His Community*, National Congress of Parents and Teachers, Chicago, Illinois. The goals set forth at the end of this pamphlet contain excellent suggestions of areas in which intensive local study can be made.

2. *National Parent-Teacher articles:*

"Our Part in the World Crisis" — Joseph K. Folsom, January, 1941.

This is required reading for any group that wants good background material on social responsibility.

"One Nation Indivisible" — Everett R. Clinchy, December, 1940.

Communities do have a responsibility for the daily living of the young folks in them. Is yours doing well by its youth?

"Building a Curriculum Together" — Arthur K. Loomis, December, 1940.

The results of the procedures described by Mr. Loomis can be obtained from the Shaker Heights City School District, Cleveland, Ohio. The title is "Meeting Educational Needs in Shaker Heights Schools." The price is \$1.00.

"Children Preferred" — Jean Coman, November, 1940.

Is adequate housing a need in your community?

"When American Schools Are Democratic" — A. J. Stoddard, August-September, 1940.

How democratic are our schools?

The Parent-Teacher Association in the Total Defense Program

Since last summer when the president of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers made a statement on the world situation, the defense program of the nation has become more definite. Communities have expanded overnight in the vicinity of war industries. There is a shortage in housing, sanitation and health services; educational and recreational facilities are strained to the breaking point. Parents are sending their sons to distant camps, and they are concerned with the friendships and opportunities for

recreation which the towns near these camps offer them.

The Executive Committee of the National Congress, at its recent meeting in New York City, adopted a program which parent-teacher associations throughout the country will put into practice. After analyzing the problems brought about by the national defense program, the committee suggests that community surveys be made and followed up in order that the children and youth of America may be safeguarded.

THE CHILD IN HIS COMMUNITY

Through Tolerance to Democracy

• "Obtain equality of opportunity for children, without regard to race, color, or creed, by fostering tolerance and promoting cooperation in home and school, local and national organizations, and public and private agencies."

— FROM THE CHILD IN HIS COMMUNITY



THE nature of our population, our knowledge of how and why people from many lands came here, and our traditional attitude of judging each man on his merits as a human being, should make us as a people particularly free from race prejudice. These factors have played an important part in creating the high degree of unity which does exist in the United States. Nevertheless, when we consider the problems of children in America we are compelled to face the fact that full tolerance is an ideal far from realization.

Millions of children in the United States suffer disadvantages and handicaps arising out of the fact that they were born into groups which because of their racial or national origin are widely thought of as inferior to the major part of the population. We need to give consideration to the possible results to the future of our country of permitting from five to ten million children to grow up feeling that they do not have the same right to life as others, that they are "different" and "inferior," and must fight their way against unreasonable obstacles merely to gain that equality of opportunity which in a democracy should be assured to them.

THE ROOTS OF INTOLERANCE

To help combat the forces of bigotry and ignorance — and propaganda which consciously plays upon both — we must try first to understand *why* such prejudices are held and then, by analyzing their causes, to attempt to eliminate them.

It is an enlightening experience to go back to childhood and trace the beginnings of intolerance. Almost without exception it is a reflection of opinions held and expressed in the home, in the school, or in the community—opinions handed down generation by generation, many of them echoes of conflicts or rivalries which occurred hundreds of years ago! It is obvious that beliefs or attitudes so formed are as baseless and irrational as believing in witchcraft. Yet psychologists assure us that such prejudices can "block," or shut off, understanding of and independent thinking about whole races, classes, or nationalities.

Since childhood is the period in which intolerance is bred, how important, then, that we as parents and teachers break this vicious chain before it links in *our* children! How important that we amplify the natural *tolerance* of children into an active *appreciation* of other cultures! Quoting Algernon D. Black:

Schools should offer an appreciative study of the contributions made to democracy through the lives of individuals and groups. They should stress biographical study of the men and women who have contributed to the safety, beauty, and happiness of the American community. We should inform our youth about those groups who, suffering abroad, came here and made contributions to American culture. The national, racial, and religious backgrounds of these groups should be known and respected. We should nurture a great pride in the variety of human resources that make up American life, and a realization that a nation of a mixture of people has a vitality and a larger future than a nation of one narrow stock.

Throughout the nation thoughtful men and women are seeking today to prepare boys and girls for responsible citizenship in a democracy. Parents and teachers recognize that the building of tolerant attitudes is one great essential.

Briefly summarized, tolerance and appreciation may be built in home, school, and community through —

- Self-examination for prejudice.
- Careful study of current propaganda devices, and their use to spread intolerance.
- Rethinking of American ideals, applying them to present local and national problems, and realizing them through student projects and group activities.
- The supplying of factual information about subjects on which propagandists are most misleading, with emphasis on the contributions of various racial and national groups to American life.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What are some ways in which a child may be helped to see that his or her national, religious, and racial background is like one spoke among many others in the American "wheel"?
2. "The denial of opportunity to any child on the basis of race, nationality background, or creed is undemocratic and is dangerous to the welfare of all children." Do you agree with this statement from the 1940 White House Conference Report? Why?
3. "With the exception of the American Indians, no group can rightly claim to be more American than another." "Every wave of immigrants has experienced minority status for a period." Discuss and illustrate.
4. What active efforts toward the building of tolerant and appreciative attitudes are being made in your school and community?
5. What is the relation of tolerance to national defense?

REFERENCES

1. Louis Adamic. *From Many Lands*. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1940.
2. Annette Smith. "The Need for Tolerance." *National Parent-Teacher*, November 1939.
3. Everett R. Clinchy. "One Nation Indivisible." *National Parent-Teacher*, December 1940.

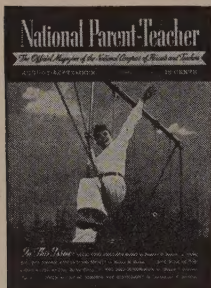
NATIONAL CONGRESS BULLETIN

Volume 8 FEBRUARY Number 6

Published monthly from September through May, bimonthly June and July, at 600 South Michigan Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois, by the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

Subscription price: 20 cents a year.

Entered as second class matter at the Post Office, Chicago, Illinois, Jan. 18, 1941. Additional entry at Aurora, Illinois, Dec. 21, 1939. Under Act of March 3, 1879.



PARENT-TEACHER PUBLICATIONS

Provide Material for PROGRAMS • FORUMS STUDY GROUPS

THE emergency facing the nation today has given great impetus to the preparation of literature for use in programs concerned with citizenship, the democratic way of life and its defense. We call the attention of parent-teacher leaders to the wealth of reliable material already available in their own parent-teacher publications. We recommend especially the following unit of material as a basis for developing worth-while programs in civic education:

1. Subscription to the National Parent-Teacher Magazine \$1.00
 2. Schools for Democracy .25
 3. Study Outline for use with Schools for Democracy .05
 4. Subscription to the National Congress Bulletin .20
- Complete cost \$1.50

Please call the attention of your program and study group chairmen to these publications. Many associations are already using them to advantage. Others are now making plans to use them.

To those who are not yet familiar with the material, a word or two about it:

THE MAGAZINE

Since August 1940 the *National Parent-Teacher* has been publishing articles based on the casebook *Learning the Ways of Democracy*. Such timely articles as the following have appeared:

Citizenship Can Be Taught
When American Schools Are Democratic
With Liberty and Justice for All
Guidance for Effective Citizenship

In the current February issue you will find the following challenging articles:
War, What and Who Make It?
Schools and Their Communities
The Least of These
Plum Springs Democracy

THE Magazine is also publishing a citizenship study course entitled "This World of Ours." This course, which started in the August-September issue, includes discussions of such important topics as "It Is a Small World," "How Much Are We Worth?" "All

American," and "Ships That Sail the Sea." Future issues will continue to present stimulating material on other subjects of major importance to parents and teachers.

SCHOOLS FOR DEMOCRACY

This book contains a collection of fourteen articles on various aspects of education in a democracy, contributed by eminent writers in educational and literary fields. It explains how democracy operates in the American school system and how informed public opinion can work toward an ever greater development of a democratic program of education.

STUDY OUTLINE FOR SCHOOLS FOR DEMOCRACY

This outline, prepared by the chairman of the committee on School Education of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, shows how the material in the book may be adapted for discussion under four general subjects:

1. *The Public Schools, Their Philosophy and History*
2. *The Teaching and Administrative Forces*
3. *External Needs and Financing of Our Schools*
4. *The School and Cooperation with the Community*

NATIONAL CONGRESS BULLETIN

You who have been reading the *Bulletin* all year are familiar with the material published under the series title "P.T.A. Activities for Promoting Democracy." A list of the topics considered each month may be found on page 4 of this issue. Last week a letter reached our office from a man well known in professional circles and long an admirer of parent-teacher work. We quote from his letter:

"I was quite impressed with the supplement in

your bulletin No. 5, which is devoted to the Bill of Rights. It is one of the finest things any organization has done in the interests of freedom and democracy. I think that it would make an excellent separate pamphlet to be given wide circulation in every local association. I herewith endorse my own suggestion to that effect!"

We added the *Bulletin* to this list not only because it will contain additional material on promoting democracy, but because coming issues will keep you informed on what the organization is doing to secure the blessings of liberty, to strengthen the faith of parents and teachers and their children in American traditions and ideals.

MANY associations have already raised funds for the purchase of this material. Others are setting aside a sum in the budget for it. Still others consider its purchase an item of association business and pay for the material as they do any ordinary association expense.

EVERY P.T.A. sensitive to the opportunity for service to the United States and its citizens will find some practical way to circulate this material among its members.

PLEASE NOTE

Our attention has been called to the fact that school officials and parent-teacher leaders are being solicited for news of parent-teacher activities by a proposed magazine to be called *Parent-Teacher Journal*. This proposed magazine has no connection whatever with our parent-teacher organization.

Please notify your school people that we have no connection whatever with this publication, and that any attempt on the part of its publishers to establish a relationship between it and our organization is without authorization or approval of the National Congress.